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RUSSIANS WARNED ON WESTERN SPIES

Press Charges Diplomatic Receptions Are Used to Gather Intelligence

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Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, May 26 — Pravda called anew today for vigilance against Western intelligence agents.

An editorial warning in the Communist party newspaper, the second in 10 days, was said to be in reply to assertions in the Western press that espionage would be unavoidable as long as political solutions of issues dividing the two major world camps were not found.

Pravda's statement and a feature article in Izvestia, the Government newspaper, focused on the presence of Soviet citizens at diplomatic receptions in Moscow.

Recalling that Oleg V. Penkovsky, a former Soviet official who was executed for treason, had allegedly used such receptions for passing intelligence information to United States and British diplomats, the newspapers raised the question of whether Russians should continue to accept invitations to such affairs.

"The Soviet people are posing the question," was the way Pravda put it, "should not we change our attitude toward certain diplomatic receptions since they have become a meeting place for spies, a place for shady deals bringing harm to peoples?"

Avoiding a direct answer,

Pravda asserted that the Russians "sincerely want to strengthen friendly relations with other peoples" but that they would be implacable toward any "barefaced insult of Soviet hospitality."

Izvestia suggested that upright citizens such as "leading engineers, workers, directors, actors, musicians or journalists" might stop accepting invitations from diplomats and foreign newsmen if less reputable Western-oriented Russians showed up at the same receptions.

"You will have to decide for yourselves, Messrs. foreign diplomats, Messrs. journalists from Western countries, with whom you would find it more interesting to meet in the Soviet Union," Izvestia said.

In the view of diplomatic observers, the alternative posed by the Government newspaper was largely rhetorical. It was believed that repeated press statements of this type could only deepen the general mistrust among the average Soviet citizens toward foreign diplomats and newsmen.

Tourists Reach People

Although there are exceptions on both sides, tourists and casual visitors to the Soviet Union have generally easier access to Russians than permanent foreign residents in the Soviet capital. The tital "diplomat" or "foreign correspondent" is a stigma difficult to wash off.

The mistrust is in part left over from Stalinist times when contacts with all foreigners was discouraged. It is also in part a natural consequence of the secrecy that pervades such a large sector of Soviet life.

Many Russians, whether in official positions or in rank and file jobs, are privy to secret information. They understandably are afraid to risk divulging it inadvertently in casual social contacts with foreigners, especially diplomats and correspondents.

Only in a few cases do foreign

residents in Moscow succeed through persistent cultivation of contacts to establish an atmosphere of trust and normal communication with Russians. Although Izvestia insisted that the vigilance drive had

nothing to do with "spymania" or signified any change in Soviet policy to promote "useful contacts" among countries and peoples, it was widely believed among Western residents here that their lot would not be made easier.